

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

SAM-01 SAB-01 AID-05 /073 W
----- 075151

R 271200Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9160

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 3139

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US TS XF

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER COMMENTS ON CURRENT USG
APPROACH TO MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM

1. DURING AMBASSADOR'S MAY 23 CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER CHATTI LATTER TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS GREAT GOT INTEREST IN SCHEDULED TALKS BETWEEN PRESIDENTS FORD AND SADAT. HE SAID GOT HOPES FOR A RESUMPTION OF AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC ACTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST TO PRODUCE A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT. CHATTI SAID GOT HAS LITTLE FAITH IN A GENEVA SOLUTION UNLESS IT IS WELL PREPARED, ESPECIALLY FROM PSYCHOLOGICAL STANDPOINT. HE SAID ALL THE ARAB STATES--"WE HAVE CONSULTED WITH THEM"--WANT THE SALZBURG MEETING TO BE IMPORTANT, AND TO LEAD TO PEACE. HE SAID THAT SINCE THE BREAKDOWN OF STEP-BY-STEP TALKS THE ENTIRE WORLD HAS SEEN THAT USG AND THE ARABS HAD DONE WHAT THEY SHOULD DO, BUT THAT ISRAEL HAD NOT. CHATTI THOUGHT THE RABIN GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE INFLUENCED IN ITS THINKING BY CURRENT WORLD-WIDE CRITICISM. AN AMERICAN INTERVENTION IS NEEDED, THE FOREIGN MINISTER ADDED, TO ACHIEVE THE RIGHT KIND
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OF CLIMATE.

2. CHATTI WASNTED TO KNOW WHETHER USG'S REASSESSMENT HAD BEEN COMPLETED. AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO PRESIDENT FORD'S RECENT STATEMENTS MADE IN INTERVIEW WITH U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT IN WHICH HE HAD AFFIRMED THAT REASSESSMENT IS STILL UNDER WAY. IWATTI SAID THAT IN GOT'S

VIEW STEP-BY-STEP DIPLOMACY MIGHT BE MORE SUCCESSFUL IF THE FINAL GOAL WERE CLEAR. "ONE STEPSNBUT ONE DOES NOT KNOW TOWARD WHAT*" AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT IN PRINCIPLE THIS IS CORRECT BUT PRACTICALLY SPEAKING IT IS DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN ADVANCE ISRAELI-ARAB AGREEMENT ON ULTIMATE GOML IN TERMS OF BORDERS, ETC. UNTIL SUZGAPICIONS ARE OVERCOME AND MORE FAVORABLE CLIMATE HAS BEEN CREATED. DIPLOMACY IS THE "ART OF THE POSSIBLE." CHATTI OPINED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER MUST MAKE POSSIBLE WHAT APPEARS TO BE IMPOSSIBLE. "IF IT WERE MERELY A QUESTION OF THE POSSIBLE, THAT WOULD BE TOO EASY." HE RETURNED TO THE PROSPECT OF TMA FORD-SADAT MEETING, SAYING IT MUST NOT END IN A VOID: "IT IS TOO IMPORTANT FOR THEM, WHEN THEY MEET, NOT TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING."
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